

IN HONOR OF BLACK LEADERSHIP
AT KEYSpan

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of an outstanding organization that has been developed at KeySpan, Black Leadership at KeySpan, or BLAK, as it is known and their Chairperson, Renee McClure and Vice-chair, Ron Thompson and the entire BLAK organization, in recognition of their promotion of professional training, networking and community commitment.

In 2000, BLAK was created by KeySpan's Black employees with the support of Robert Catell—Chairman and CEO, Craig Mathews—Vice Chairman and COO, Colin Watson—Senior VP, Strategic Marketing and Elaine Weinstein, Senior VP of Human Resources, and senior management to establish an entity within the organization whose vision is: To be a resource for fostering leadership, excellence and community commitment among Black employees for the benefit of the corporation and its stakeholders.

In September of 2001, BLAK held its first "Executive Connection" day, providing BLAK members and the senior managers of KeySpan a forum to come together, exchange ideas, and establish relationships. BLAK recognizes that in order to be an effective organization it must develop communications throughout the corporation as a whole. As part of this effort, BLAK has taken part in one of KeySpan's monthly breakfast meetings to inform management about BLAK and has established an internal website and quarterly newsletter to keep its members informed.

BLAK has also established a number of committees to address the concerns of its members. One committee is the Community Involvement Committee (CIC). While a number of options were discussed reflecting the wide interests of its members, CIC felt that one of the most effective ways would be to become actively involved in two community high schools, and hopefully to expand their involvement with many other local schools in the future. BLAK's professional development initiatives include a resume bank, a coaching program, and a mentoring program. The variety of programs and services offered by BLAK illustrates a talented and eager membership. This membership also reflects the outstanding leadership of BLAK's Chair Renee McClure and Vice-chair Ronald Thompson. These two individuals along with the executive board, committees, advisors, and senior management continue to develop an outstanding organization that promotes growth, development and the community commitment that makes KeySpan such a tremendous asset to the community. As such, I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring this truly remarkable organization and its leaders.

HONORING THE PEOPLE OF SAN
GABRIEL

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the people of San Gabriel, California as they celebrate the 75th anniversary of their legendary and beautiful San Gabriel Civic Auditorium.

Throughout its rich history, the Auditorium has played host to hundreds of performances delighting audiences from the San Gabriel Valley and around the world. The Auditorium has also been admired for its beauty and historical character by hundreds of thousands of residents of nearby cities and visitors to Southern California. The San Gabriel Civic Auditorium was designed and built by John Steven McGroarty, from nearby Tujunga, and was dedicated on March 5, 1927. McGroarty went on to become the first poet laureate of California and a U.S. Congressman from 1935 to 1939 representing the region of Southern California that I am proud to serve. McGroarty built the theater specifically for his production, "Mission Play," which told the story of the founding of the California missions by the Franciscans under the leadership of Father Junipero Serra. McGroarty designed the façade of the theatre to look much like his favorite California mission, San Antonio de Padua in Monterey County. The "Mission Play" ran for five years and gave a total of 3,198 performances.

The theatre was closed in 1932 during the height of the Great Depression. But a group of concerned San Gabriel residents formed a citizens' committee with the goal of having the city purchase the theatre and reopen it. Thankfully, they were successful, and in 1945 the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium re-opened its doors again to the community. Since its re-opening, the theatre has seen a wealth of America's greatest performers. Notables such as Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Ginger Rogers, Raymond Burr, Jo Anne Worley, and even Bob Hope have graced its fine stage.

This year, the same stage will play host to a number of culturally diverse performances and festivities. The first of these performances will be the music of the Orchestra of the Californias. This newly formed orchestra is a product of bi-national cooperation. Formed by the Commission of the Californias, under the auspices of Governor Gray Davis of California, Governor Leonel Cota-Montañón of Baja California Sur, and Governor Eugenio Elorduy-Walther of Baja California, the Orchestra of the Californias has become the headline performer of a musical tour throughout California and Mexico. This is the first time that the governors of the three Californias have joined to present such a significant cultural achievement. On February 15, 2002, the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium will be the only theatre in Los Angeles County to welcome the Orchestra of the Californias. Under the direction of maestro David Atherton, the orchestra will play an assortment of classical favorites for what I am sure will be an appreciative audience.

I ask all Members of Congress to join Congresswoman HILDA SOLIS and me in congratulating the people of San Gabriel as they celebrate the 75th year of their beautiful San Gabriel Civic Auditorium.

IN HONOR OF SISTER IRENE
SMITH STRICKLAND

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Sister Irene Smith Strickland in recognition of her one-hundredth birthday.

Irene was the first of eleven children born on February 9, 1902 in Hampton, South Carolina to Margaret and John Smith. She moved to New York City in 1927 and joined the Corner Stone Baptist Church, where she served as an Usher.

Sister Strickland was married to the late Troy Strickland who passed away in June 1988. She and Troy had one son who passed away in June of 1993. She also has one daughter in law, four grandsons, two grand daughters, and six great grandchildren.

In November of 1939 she joined Zion Baptist Church where she also served as an Usher. She also worked on the nurses unit as a personal nurse to the late Rev. B.J. Lowery.

In June of 1939, Irene was initiated into Omega Chapter #48 Order of Eastern Stars serving in all capacities. She is, a member of the 2nd Masonic District and will be celebrating her birthday on February 17 at the Ridged Masonic Temple.

Mr. Speaker, Sister Irene Smith Strickland has lived through more than most of us will ever know. It is my pleasure to join in the celebration of her one-hundredth birthday, a milestone that many of us hope to reach. As such she is more than worthy of receiving this recognition today and I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring this truly remarkable woman.

CONGRATULATIONS TO PASTOR
AND MRS. W.C. SCALES, SR. ON
THEIR 68TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleagues here in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in congratulating a wonderful couple who have reached a magnificent milestone in their lives, Pastor and Mrs. W.C. Scales, Sr., who will celebrate their 68th wedding anniversary on March 7, 2002.

William C. Scales, Sr. and Myra E. Scales were united in holy matrimony on March 7, 1934, in the beautiful city of Charleston, West Virginia. Throughout their marriage, Pastor and Mrs. Scales have maintained a strong partnership, working together in ministry and giving so generously of themselves to their church and their community. After becoming a successful businessman in West Virginia, Pastor Scales moved his family to Cleveland, Ohio where there were even greater employment opportunities. As a faithful Seventh-day Adventist, he refused to work on the Sabbath, but he was able to follow his trade with Sabbath privileges. Pastor Scales and his wife faithfully served the Cleveland, Ohio Glenville